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OLC 76-0498

12 February 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Dorothy Fosdick and Richard Perle
re Radiation Hazard in Moscow

X1 1. Following guidance given to me by the Director after his conversations with the White House, I met with Dorothy Fosdick and Richard Perle, of the Senate Government Operations Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, today in response to their recent demands for information on the facts concerning the radiation problem at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. [REDACTED]

X1 [REDACTED] I told them I had heard no such story [REDACTED] and could not accept this as fact but I would look into it. I also said I had no knowledge of Secretary Kissinger's contacts with Mr. Dobryian. I indicated that our information was that the radiation level (which was not nuclear in character) had not reached the industrial hazard level, even by Soviet standards, and that this level was considerably lower than the comparable figure for the U.S.

X1 2. I took Fosdick and Perle to task for making the comment to [REDACTED] that our refusal to provide information being a denial by the former Chairman of the Republican National Committee to provide information to a Democratic Presidential candidate. I said this, of course, was ridiculous. They attempted to ease out of this by saying that what they meant was that a denial could be interpreted in such a fashion.

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3. I told them that this whole subject was really a matter that they should take up with the State Department and I asked if they had called State. They said they had not [REDACTED]

X1 [REDACTED] I said I could only say that there were sensitivities involved in connection with the domestic negotiations and these were not our responsibility. Perle came back with the statement that he assumed we were responsible for any counterintelligence actions against a U.S. Embassy and that I should be able to brief on that aspect of it.

4. We then began to make distinctions between the diplomatic vs. the technical side of the situation and I told him for all intents and purposes I had provided them with the technical information. I said that while the level of radiation was not sufficiently high in the opinion of the doctors involved to constitute a health hazard, opinions could differ on this. I said we had had problems right here in the U.S. where there had been high incidence of certain illnesses in areas where radiation exposure was suspected but it could not be proved. I said I thought it was difficult to establish a direct cause and effect relationship in these instances. We wound up our session by my urging them to contact the State Department.

5. I also said I understood that Dr. Kissinger was having a press conference tomorrow at which it was expected that this question would be raised. I also urged that they hold off on any public comment until the Secretary had his press conference, in the hope that it might allay their concerns. They said they would follow both of these suggestions.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Legislative Counsel

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